

took his place, and the new Four were well-mingled as inseparable as the old Shaw, in particular, during the years between 1892 and his own marriage in 1898, spent practically every holiday with them, and was also constantly at Grosvenor Road Shaw and Wallas read the proofs of *Trade Unionism*, when it had reached that stage, to Shaw, "our oldest friend and comrade" they express gratitude for doing a like service with regard to *The Decay of Capitalist Civilisation*, in 1923, "in the midst of a general election in which we were otherside engaged"

"At every stage, long before that, these two were taken into counsel, for argument, discussion, the most thorough sifting and testing of every view and point So were many others, on specific points It is in an atmosphere of friendliness, of frequent cheerful, open talk, of impassioned and never dreary preoccupation with their chosen piece of work, that one must see them, if one is to see them at all, in the early days at Grosvenor Road, and indeed throughout their lives They took their work with them, wherever they went, just as they talked about it, trying out their ideas, with everyone they met When they left London for the country—generally Surrey—in the summer months, they changed the scene but not the occupation Of the life they lived when thus withdrawn, an amusing vignette is given by Shaw in a letter to Ellen Terry He writes from Dorking, in May 1897, 'when he, his future wife (Miss Payne Townshend) and Miss Beatrice

Creighton
(daughter of the Bishop, for whom, while he
lived, as
for his widow afterwards, Mrs Webb had a
particular
admiration) were sharing a house there,

" I wonder what you would think of our life—our
eternal political
shop, our mornings of dogged writing, all in our
separate rooms,
our ravenous plain meals, our bicycling, the Webbs'
incurable
spooning over their industrial and political
science "